GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2712
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2007
INDIAN WORKERS IN GULF COUNTRIES
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Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of Indian workers illegally working in the foreign countries, particularly in the Gulf countries;

(b) whether the passports and other documents of the workers of India are being seized by their employees;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether such workers have been/being deported by these countries;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to render necessary assistance and protect such workers from deportation/harassment?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): There are no official figures available with regard to the number off illegal Indians working in these countries.

(b) & (c): It is reported that in Gulf counties, the passport of the Indian workers are nor mally kept by their employers till the time the employment contract is competed. The Indian Missions have requested the local authorities from time to time for retention of the passports by the workers concerned and also for penalizing the employers retaining the passports of workers without their consent.

(d) & (e): Gulf countries deport foreign workers including Indians from time to time for violation of local laws, non-possession of valid visas/residence permits etc., as part of the normal law enforcement process. During the year 2007 (till October, the number of such workers deported/ECs issued are as under from Gulf countries:

Kuwait	Bahrain	UAE	Saudi Arabia	Oman	Qatar
8234	1481	40088	28904	1086	2050

(f): The Indian Missions organize smooth issue of Emergency Certificates by making special drives involving the local Indian communities. The complaints of ill treatment, harassment, breach of contracts etc., received from the Indian workers are taken up by the Mission with the sponsors / employers, Labour Department and local police authorities for appropriate action.

To protect the various rights of the workers, the Ministry has also entered into bilateral labour agreements with the UAE and Kuwait. These MOUs provide for a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of both countries to meet periodically to discuss and resolve grievances of workers. An additional protocol has also been signed with Qatar recently. MOU with Malaysia and Oman has been initialed. Dialogue has been initiated for similar agreements with KSA and Bahrain.